



Dorset Council Local Plan



Lyme Regis 2021 Consultation Summary of Responses



January 2023



Dorset
Council

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1. Lyme Regis

1.1. Introduction

Duty to cooperate

East Devon District Council

- We welcome the opportunity to actively work with you on issues around meeting development and other needs, as well as wider issues, though work is most likely to be around local rather than strategic considerations.
- Any joint working will need to consider overall constraints that exist and proximity and ease of access to services and facilities - reference to previous joint landscape led assessment of development opportunities which highlighted limitations and challenges.
- More recently work on East Devon Villages Plan did not reveal suitable land for development at Uplyme.
- Work has not been undertaken by East Devon District Council in relation to meeting housing need - so it is too early to draw the conclusion that EDDC can meet their own need.
- Meeting housing need should be discussed through the Duty to Cooperate.

Savills on behalf of Hallam Land Management Ltd

- It is not clear from the information presented during this consultation process, the extent of discussions regarding cross-boundary matters that have taken place between Dorset Council and East Devon Council on this matter. We are therefore concerned that the duty to co-operate has not yet been met.

The Lyme Regis Society

- Lyme Regis is on the very edge of West Dorset so any plans should be mindful of East Devon Local Plans and take advantage of any synergies.
- Our nearest small neighbour is Uplyme (East Devon), any development there may have an impact on our town whether it is from increased traffic, new businesses or schools with increased capacity.

1.2. Vision

Paragraph 37.2.1 - Vision for Lyme Regis

East Devon District Council

- (Paragraph 37.2.1) It is assumed that this is not a meant to be an at or post 2038 position, rather it is assumed to be about positive working from now to 2038 (and beyond) - suggest amendment to clarify.

Lyme Regis Town Council

- The council identified the town's role as a: tourism destination, a centre for local services and local people, a location for elders.
- In 15 years' time, the council saw the town as: a provider of local services, having achieved zero carbon by 2030, having increased economic prosperity through technology.

The Lyme Regis Society

- We see Lyme Regis as an all year round tourist destination. In the summer Lyme is a popular seaside town with many festivals and entertainments available for both adults and families. In the winter it hosts those people interested in the Jurassic Coast and walking some of the South West cliff walks and trails.
- Very similar to today in style and as building opportunities are limited there will still be new builds but in parts of large gardens or as re-development of larger houses into flats and apartments.

1.3. Development Strategy

Paragraphs 35.3.1-4

Lyme Regis Town Council

- The town council recognises the limitations for development at Lyme Regis and agrees that it is constrained by several significant environmental factors including:
 - Land instability and ground conditions
 - The extent of the developed area and the lack of any substantial remaining land available within the town's boundary.
 - The designation of Dorset and East Devon World Heritage site
 - The Dorset and East Devon AONB's
 - The extensive Lyme Regis Conservation Area and the large number of other Listed Buildings and heritage assets
 - The high quality of the town's general landscape setting
 - The general topography of the area with steep slopes and few areas of level ground

The Lyme Regis Society

- Lyme Regis is correctly identified as a Tier 2 settlement but with close links to Axminster, Bridport, Weymouth and Dorchester within Dorset and to towns within East Devon including Exeter city.
- There is very little development land available either within the town's development area or near to the town and all land can be subject to land slip, subsidence or shift from natural springs and water courses.
- Lyme sits within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (Sect 2.6.13), the Jurassic Coast has World Heritage Site status and has its shoreline protected from an environmental perspective.
- The approach for increasing housing where existing services are already available appears to be a sensible way forward. Lyme has no extra capacity for large scale development.

East Devon District Council

- It is important to recognise that the East Devon AONB sweeps over Uplyme and surrounding areas, and this and other factors act as a constraining factor on scope for development at Uplyme.

Savills on behalf of Hallam Land Management Ltd

- The draft Local Plan seeks to only allocate 40 new homes in Lyme Regis. The proposed growth is substantially lower than the other tier 2 settlements in the Western Dorset functional area.
- It is of vital importance to increase the supply of housing to the area to provide more affordable housing and greater stock to the market with a range of affordable home ownership products to

enable younger families to make the step onto the property market rather than being forced out of the town.

Ken Parke Planning Consultants on behalf of Mr & Mrs Wellman

- Lyme Regis is all within the protected AONB and therefore any new development will fall within this area. The town is also constrained by land stability as well as highway constraints.

Public response

- Building opportunities are limited there will still be new builds but in parts of large gardens or as re-development of larger houses into flats and apartments.
- Evidence is lacking on freeing up development sites in the town centre.
- The town must evolve and develop even though it has very little physical space to expand.

1.4. Town centre strategy

Paragraph 37.4.1 - Town Centre

Lyme Regis Town Council

- The council agrees that Lyme Regis should retain its existing status in the retail hierarchy, i.e., as a 'Town Centre'.
- Wherever possible, we would not want to see existing retail units lost to other uses.
- We are supportive of alternative uses (primarily but not exclusively residential) above ground floor level.

The Lyme Regis Society

- The recent changes to the classes of use of shops (E class) and increase in the range of 'sui generis' businesses may reduce the work of planning but may allow businesses to change a use.

Paragraph 37.4.4 - Food stores

The Lyme Regis Society

- The town benefits from smaller supermarkets with both a Tesco's and Co-op on Broad Street.
- Other independent shops provide fresh meat, fish, bakery, and delicatessen goods.

Public response

- The Plan should encourage a stronger presence of local grocery businesses on the high street.
- Lack of leisure centre or major supermarket - this aspect needs to be preserved.

Paragraph 37.4.6 - The Three Cups Hotel

The Lyme Regis Society

- Palmer's brewery, who own The Three Cups Hotel need to continue their investment plans to create retail units, restaurants, and dwellings at the site.

Paragraph 37.4.6 - The Regent Cinema

The Lyme Regis Society

- The Regent Cinema re-built to enhance our cultural and entertainment offering.

Town Centre Parking

The Lyme Regis Society

- Town Council must protect and take care of their property assets and run their car parks successfully.

Public response

- Making the main street, car park free would be a huge benefit – making it easier and more pleasant for pedestrians and in cutting air pollution.

Heritage

Historic England

- Historic England notes and welcomes the references to Lyme Regis' historic character and heritage assets in the introduction and vision. However, there is no local plan policy setting out how development within Lyme Regis' Town Centre, especially within the Conservation Area, should conserve and enhance its historic environment and positively contribute to local character and distinctiveness in streetscape and townscape.
- We consider an additional policy should be introduced to address these points, building on the Dorset Historic Towns Survey for Lyme Regis We would also welcome a discussion about the need for an update to the Lyme Regis Conservation Area Appraisal and the preparation of a management plan.

The Lyme Regis Society

- Most of Lyme Regis is designated a Conservation Area and has many Grade II listed buildings.
- Neither the Council nor Historic England have details of what is inside listed buildings, many owners will change internal fittings.

1.5. Main development opportunities

The following sections include summaries of representation received regarding the following policies:

- Town wide issues
- Policy LYME1 – Woodbury Down Extension

1.6. Town wide issues

Demographics

Lyme Regis Town Council

- The very high and growing number of elderly, retired residents.

The Lyme Regis Society

- The town has a population of around 3,700 residents however this can be boosted by anywhere up to 20,000 visitors on a particularly popular summer's day.
- The proportion of older people is higher in Lyme Regis compared to the normal population distribution. The town demographic may well change as the existing population ages and more people retire to the area.

Second Homes

Lyme Regis Town Council

- The very high and growing number of second and holiday homes.

Savills on behalf of Hallam Land Management Ltd

- The town has a high proportion of second homes and holiday homes.

Public response

- Any site for development in Lyme Regis should be designated affordable housing and not be sold for second homes and holiday lets.
- Concern with numbers of second homes and holiday homes in Lyme Regis.
- Concern with population increase during the summer, second homes and holiday lets.

Affordable Housing

Lyme Regis Town Council

- Very high housing prices and limited availability of 'affordable' homes for first-time buyers.
- A limited supply of social housing and an allocations policy which often means that genuinely local needs are left unmet.
- The town council commends the recent partnership between the Lyme Regis Community Land Trust (CLT) and Abri which led to the development of 15 new affordable homes at Timber Hill.

Savills on behalf of Hallam Land Management Ltd

- Average house prices in Lyme Regis exceed £400,000. The high house prices and low salaries presents a real and current issue for young people and families who live and work in Lyme Regis, creating an acute affordability issue.

The Lyme Regis Society

- It is difficult to see a solution to providing affordable housing however we do have the Magna Housing association operating in Lyme.

Employment

Lyme Regis Town Council

- The preponderance of low-wage and seasonal jobs.
- The council has previously supported the retention of 'Key Employment Site' status for the Lyme Regis Business Park off Uplyme Road and would maintain this position.

The Lyme Regis Society

- The main employment opportunities within the town are based around hospitality and tourism.

Public response

- Lack of employment sites in the town - bringing in more families of employment age will only mean more people will have to travel by car to other destinations for work.

Infrastructure Requirements

Lyme Regis Town Council

- Very limited investment in new town infrastructure.
- We are surprised at the lack of reference to the general infrastructure necessary to support any new development options.

- Maintain or improve local service provision to meet the needs of the local population.

Public transport

Lyme Regis Town Council

- Poor and reducing levels of public transport and other public services.
- Remote location at the furthest reach of the District and County with difficult access to higher order facilities in larger towns and sub-regional centres; the latter being roughly 30 miles distant and only readily accessible by private motor car.

The Lyme Regis Society

- Lyme has a bus service to Exeter, Weymouth (Tier 1), Bridport and Dorchester (Tier 1) although buses operate a limited service particularly in winter.
- A reduction in travel options would also impact more heavily of the older residents.

Traffic issues

Lyme Regis Town Council

- High levels of traffic congestion; especially during the summer period.
- Poor access and significant restrictive pinch-points in areas of the town, with little or no means to improve it given the nature of the existing built environment and the number and location of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.
- Any significant new development is likely to exacerbate existing problems with traffic congestion and pedestrian safety.

The Lyme Regis Society

- Concern over increase in car ownership.
- Traffic issues in the town centre, pedestrian access needs improvement, roads are narrow and twisty and during summer months quite congested at times.

Public response

- A reduction in travel options would impact heavily on the older residents.
- Options to reduce reliance on private car use – for residents and visitors alike.
- Transportation infrastructure unable to support additional vehicles.

Climate Change

Lyme Regis Town Council

- The local declaration of a climate emergency and the need to prioritise environmental objectives and the early move towards zero carbon by 2030 as an overarching and overriding objective.

The Lyme Regis Society

- Achieving a more energy efficient town, employing sensible, pragmatic ideas to improving our housing and public buildings and ensuring any extensions, alterations or new builds take account of environmental issues and approaches.
- Older buildings need to have the flexibility to take advantage of Historic England recommended products such as double and triple glazing and improved guttering and water disposal.
- Creating energy savings and meeting eco targets for the Council.

Coastal change

The Lyme Regis Society

- More cliff protection and shoring work may be required along the East side of the town where land by the allotments is falling to the beach at regular intervals.

Environment Agency

- It is noted that Lyme Regis and Charmouth are both subject to coastal land instability.

Historic England

- We note that Lyme Regis and Charmouth have been identified as places with particular land instability issues. Both are conservation areas and have many individually designated and non-designated heritage assets. We would like these matters to be acknowledged in the supporting text and Policy ENV15 to set out how land instability will be approached where it affects the historic environment.

Public response

- Concern with climate change and sea level rise - unacceptable that developments are still being proposed so close to the sea and on a landscape formed by landslip.
- Frequent landslips along the coastline.

Coastal Defences

The Lyme Regis Society

- The town and coastline have benefited from major investment in 2005-7 of sea defences and piling support for cliffs and hills within and outside the town.

Tourism

Lyme Regis Town Council

- Recent data suggests that the number of day visitors to Lyme Regis has grown considerably in the last 10 years and currently totals well over 1m per year.
- Given the scale of growth planned in Lyme's drive time day trip catchment, the number of day visitors is likely to continue to increase.
- We would like to progress discussions about improving the signage to and from Lyme, especially from the A35, to ensure vehicle take the most appropriate routes.

The Lyme Regis Society

- For Lyme to maintain its position as a desirable all year-round seaside destination.

Savills on behalf of Hallam Land Management Ltd

- The town of Lyme Regis is one of Dorset's principal tourist resorts and an important centre for visitors to the World Heritage Coast.

Public response

- The main employment opportunities within the town are based around hospitality and tourism.

Park and Ride facility

Lyme Regis Town Council

- Welcome continuation of discussions about a strategic park and ride facility for the town, possibly serving the community of Charmouth as well.

The Lyme Regis Society

- The land opposite Strawberry Fields is used as the Park and Ride facility in the summer to alleviate congestion in the town centre.

Water/Drainage

The Lyme Regis Society

- Drainage and sewage systems operate at their limits with rainfall and floods causing river surges and overflow from the local sewage processing site into the River Lim.

Public response

- Severe ground water issues affecting existing properties.
- Lyme has key constraints around the town and is prone to subsidence, landslip and being affected by underground water courses and springs.

Services & Facilities

The Lyme Regis Society

- Lyme has a medical centre, dentists, primary school and a well-respected secondary school (Woodroffe) with another primary school nearby in Uplyme.

Savills on behalf of Hallam Land Management Ltd

- Lyme Regis has a good range of services and facilities, including two primary schools and a secondary school, GP surgery, town hall, shops, pubs, restaurants, and tourist attractions.

Public response

- Concern over local health service provision.
- Many of the other town locations suggested for building already have a well-formed development plan and can provide the services and infrastructure needed for such housing development.

Broadband

The Lyme Regis Society

- Lyme benefits from the availability of a fibre network. As data usage increases the speed and reliability of data networks is vital.

1.7. Policy LYME₁: Woodberry Down Extension

Delivery

Dalton-Aram Planning Ltd on behalf of Mrs Pam Taylor

- We agree with the allocation of the site within the draft Local Plan which is considered to be the most logical and appropriate extension to Lyme Regis, as it is next to the Woodberry Down site.

Savills on behalf of Hallam Land Management Ltd

- Object to the assertion that the Woodberry Down Extension is the only identifiable development opportunity.

The Lyme Regis Society

- The Woodberry Down extension of 40 houses is currently being constructed in Colway Lane / Queens Walk.

Public response

- No evidence that the site is deliverable.
- Constraints of site will make housing expensive and unaffordable.
- Ground conditions mean there is a question mark over the viability of the development.
- Scale of development seems excessive - allows little green space to be incorporated to mitigate the development.
- The housing meets high carbon-negative, environmental and social standards.

Affordable Housing

Public response

- Difficult to see a solution to providing affordable housing.
- Phases 1 & 2 have a good proportion of affordable housing, and this should be repeated.

Site Access

Public response

- Vehicular access points to the proposed development are unclear.
- Concern with impacts of increased traffic.
- Need for a transport plan before allocation.
- Current exit via Colway Lane and Pine Ridge on to the Charmouth Road is already very busy and can form blind spots, especially at peak times and during holiday periods.
- Vehicle access via Pine Ridge acceptable and Colway Lane should be retained as cycle/footway only.
- The junction at the Charmouth Road entrance to the site off Colway Lane is currently an unsustainable traffic hotspot - concerns with impacts of additional traffic.
- Woodberry Down congested with lots of parking on the street, vehicular access is poor.
- Development here should consider the route from Woodberry Down to The Woodroffe School via Colway Lane, it is dangerous for pedestrians at present.

Biodiversity and Environment

Natural England

- The proposed allocation also includes land along the western margin identified in the existing and potential Dorset ecological network.

Public response

- To meet this duty DC must consider the ecological value of the site.
- Biodiversity net gain from the development.
- Inclusion of LYME1 fails to meet Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.
- The site attracts a variety of wildlife and bird species including bats, owls, buzzards, badgers, foxes, amphibians and occasionally deer - concern with displacement of wildlife.

Paragraph 37.5.1 - Infrastructure & Services

Lyme Regis Town Council

- Needs to recognise need for infrastructure to support development.

The Lyme Regis Society

- Upgrade of fibre data network.

Public response

- It seems sensible to exploit existing facilities to their maximum rather than to build new facilities at a much higher cost in new or less developed locations.
- Facilities are not within walking distance of homes.

Paragraph 37.5.2 - Land Stability

Environment Agency

- This site is identified as Zone 2 Land Instability. With further failure of the Spittles landslip and the noted drainage issues, alternative sites should be considered. Any development here must be precautionary and well assessed.

Symondsburry Parish Council

- Support the current approach. Suggested site does have substantial technical issues to be overcome and viability will be an issue.

Dalton-Aram Planning Ltd on behalf of Mrs Pam Taylor

- Site in instability zone 2 and AONB therefore these matters will need to be considered in design.

Public response

- Need for extensive geotechnical surveys of the land prior to allocation.
- Lightweight structures required to reduce instability pressure.
- Geological evidence that development is unsuitable.
- Work on the proposed site could trigger land-sliding or subsidence in nearby existing properties.
- Suggestion that foundations for developments in the area need to be extensive - however if you dig too deep then you hit the soft wet black mud common to the geology of the area - it is no way a stable setting.

Paragraph 37.5.3 - Water and Sewage

The Lyme Regis Society

- Upgrade to sewage systems.

Public response

- Bloor Homes did not exercise the option to develop the site due to associated costs relating to land stability and drainage issues.
- The land is known to have a complex structure with underground springs.
- Sewerage issues currently.
- The ground on this particular site is saturated for most of the year.
- When it rains, during storms, there is a river running down the whole of Woodberry Down Way and affecting local gardens.

Paragraph 37.5.4 - Landscape & Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Dorset AONB Team

- Agreement to the policy, subject to changes.
- The landscape setting of Lyme Regis tends to be both attractive and relatively high quality.
- The topography of the town's surroundings is such that almost all growth options outside of the town boundary would result in a degree of harm to the AONB, due to the visual prominence of the valley sides.
- Encouragement to exclude housing development from the western portion of the site, to ensure that the layout corresponds well to the previous allocation, and to not breach the existing right of way.
- Suggestion that the Plan should incorporate an indicative spatial layout to reflect these issues.
- The use of this site will produce some adverse landscape and visual effects, primarily due to its elevated and peripheral character.
- Impact on the relatively unspoilt rural setting of the town.
- A sensitive design of relatively low-density, with open space in the western portion of the allocation, will help to moderate the effects of development to some degree.

Natural England

- Natural England has no objection to the principle of the policy, however, given the landscape and ecological sensitivity of the site the policies and proposals map should include further information on the areas within the allocations considered suitable for development and those needed to provide the required landscaping and public open space.

Dalton-Aram Planning Ltd on behalf of Mrs Pam Taylor

- It is acknowledged that the site is located wholly within the Dorset AONB and as a result residential development will need to be sympathetically designed with appropriate landscaping and screening to ensure that the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB are not harmed.

Public response

- The scheme has not demonstrated exceptional reasons why the site should be allocated for development within the AONB.
- Site is visually contained to northeast and south, will need some screening to north and west.
- Proposed housing allocations in Lyme Regis harmful to character.
- Impact on the unique valley view of Lyme Regis.
- Difficult to see how the site "can be sympathetically designed to ensure that the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB are not harmed" as suggested in the consultation.
- Impact on the AONB, through housing extending right up the hill to the caravan site.

Paragraph 37.5.5 - Footpath network

Dalton-Aram Planning Ltd on behalf of Mrs Pam Taylor

- Adjacent Public footpath could be linked to existing footpaths.

Public response

- Concern with the loss of the existing footpath.
- DC has not met its responsibility under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

- No safe cycleway into Lyme from Woodberry Down or cycle parking in Lyme Regis.

Criterion I - Public open space

Natural England

- Clarification on the character of the public open space should also be included e.g. native broadleaved woodland, community orchard, etc.

Criterion IV - Biodiversity Net Gain

Natural England

- Natural England welcomes the provision for achieving biodiversity gains. We recommend the clause includes a reference to the need to enhancing the function of the ecological corridor along the western margin of the site and the requirement to achieve a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity.

1.8. Omission Sites

Land at Charmouth Road, Lyme Regis (LA/LYME/oo6)

Ken Parke Planning Consultants on behalf of Mr & Mrs Wellman

- Land parcel is located on the northern side of Lyme Regis, gently sloping to the west, with access from the A3052 road from Charmouth to Lyme Regis.
- The site area is 4.67 hectares and is currently used as a park and ride.
- Access onto the A3052 with wide site splays.
- Within the Dorset AONB and within the Wootton Hills Landscape Character Area.
- Within flood zone 1 - no risk of flooding and land stability zone 1 – suitable for development.
- Outside the development boundary. With an existing footpath link to the town.
- There is potential for residential development, or a mixed development including a Park and Ride element that may be reduced or relocated within a comprehensive scheme.

Strawberry Fields (Timber Hill), Lyme Regis (LA/LYME/oo1)

Lyme Regis Town Council

- The allocation of the site at Strawberry Fields (Timber Hill) for leisure is supported.

The Lyme Regis Society

- Strawberry Field to potentially be released to provide affordable housing.

The Three Cups, Lyme Regis

The Lyme Regis Society

- The Three Cups redevelopment.

land off Talbot Road, Lyme Regis

The Lyme Regis Society

- Bloor homes own land off Talbot Road which they have still to develop as housing.

Land at Sidmouth Road, Lyme Regis (Devon)

Developers/Landowners/Agents

- Land at Sidmouth Road, Lyme Regis is also a sustainable and viable development opportunity to increase the housing provision to meet the acute need for housing in the town.
- The site is located on the western edge of the coastal town of Lyme Regis (Devon).
- Within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- The site could provide approximately 120 new homes, with 50% of these being affordable.